



Yard Waste Disposal During the COVID-19 Response

Scope and focus of this fact sheet:

As a result of circumstances created by COVID-19, some residents are facing changes in their usual methods of yard waste disposal. This factsheet provides an overview of options for yard waste disposal. Residents should check with their local waste hauler and local government to be sure a particular option is available in their respective communities.

What is Yard Waste:

Yard waste or “landscape waste” includes any grass or shrubbery cuttings, leaves, tree limbs, and other materials accumulated as the result of the care of lawns, shrubbery, vines, and trees. Yard waste does not include vegetative materials, especially trees, that are generated as part of pre-construction or land-clearing activities.

How to properly dispose of yard waste:

Some areas of Illinois do not offer curbside yard waste collections. In addition, in response to COVID-19, some waste haulers may be limiting their yard waste collections as part of an ongoing effort to protect worker safety. Residents should continue to follow local guidelines on yard waste collection where collections are available. For on-site options, yard waste can be mulched into the lawn during mowing, can be mulched for use in flowerbeds and gardens, or can be composted. Composting leaves and grass clippings produces soil fertilizer through decomposition. Compost piles are simple to begin and maintain. If you are new to composting, or need any guidance, a composting guide can be found on the Illinois EPA’s [composting webpage](#).

What to avoid when disposing of yard waste:

Yard waste should not be open dumped. As with other waste, the open dumping of yard waste is illegal and may result in substantial penalties.

The ability of residents to burn their own yard waste depends on local laws and ordinances. Local governments have the authority to impose limitations on burning landscape waste, including limiting the hours when burning can occur, limiting the types of material that can be burned, limiting burning during certain weather conditions, and even banning the open burning of yard waste entirely. Residents should check with their local government regarding laws or ordinances regulating yard waste burning in their communities.

